GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:573
ANSWERED ON:21.10.2008
ORGANIC FARMING IN TEA ESTATES
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Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether many of the tea estates in the country are gradually shifting to organic farming;

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the improvement in the yield as a result thereof;

(c) whether the Government has taken any step to encourage organic farming in the tea estates and provide additional sops to the labourers and tea companies engaged in organic farming in the tea industry;

(d) if so,the details thereof; and

(e) if not,the reasons therefor?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY(SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH)

a) & b) Few tea gardens mostly in Darjeeling and South India have been producing organic tea.The combined total of organic tea produced is around 10 million kg per year which is about 1 % of the total tea produced in India.The experience of the gardens whic.h have switched over to organic production is that there was a drop in yield in the initial years which gets stabilized after few years.

c) to e) Tea Board,under its ongoing Quality Upgradation and product diversification scheme has been providing subsidy to the tea gardens practicing organic production @ 50% of the cost of organic certification from accredited certifying agencies subject to a ceiling`limit of Rs.l lakh per certificate.

Recently,the Tea Board has launched a project with financial support from Common Fund for Commodities to develop the technology, techniques and systems for organic tea production including the conversion of existing tea gardens into organic tea gardens besides the other objectives of the project is to develop necessary trained manpower and best practices in the cultivation of organic tea.